

N E W S R E L E A S E

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California EDD to Help Unemployed in Hurricane Ravaged Louisiana

SACRAMENTO – Staff of the California Employment Development Department (EDD) will assist in processing an unprecedented number of Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) claims from Louisiana residents displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

The destructive storm has impacted the entire state, affecting the ability of the Louisiana Department of Labor to respond to the needs of its residents now finding refuge in various places throughout the country. Potentially one million workers in the Gulf Coast region may be left without a job.

“Hurricane Katrina was absolutely devastating to so many people, families and communities,” said Victoria Bradshaw, Secretary of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. “They deserve every resource we can make available to assist them. Our staff is more than ready to help out those displaced due to this tragedy.”

California joins Texas in filing UI and DUA claims for affected workers through a toll-free number designated for the use of Louisiana residents only, wherever they now reside. That number is 1-800-818-7811. Louisiana residents can also establish a claim via the Internet at www.ldol.state.la.us.

California residents may still file their California UI claims by either accessing EDD's Web site at www.edd.ca.gov or by calling one of EDD's four toll-free numbers:

English - 1-800-300-5616

Chinese - 1-800-547-3506

Spanish - 1-800-326-8937

Vietnamese 1-800-547-2058

California has six UI call centers. The one in Sacramento, with more than 70 available staff, is being redirected to take the calls coming in from Louisiana claimants. While this may cause a slight delay in serving California UI claimants, the EDD is asking for patience as assistance is extended to those dealing with the catastrophic impact of the hurricane.

Once California UI staff receives all of the necessary information for processing claims for the Louisiana residents, the materials will be transmitted back to Louisiana for the actual issuance of payment. Staff will be coordinating to ensure that disaster relief checks can be delivered to and distributed to those now living in shelters. Those living with friends or family elsewhere can have their checks delivered to those addresses.

The Labor Department in Louisiana is working to process UI and DUA payments as quickly as possible. The help coming from California and Texas will assist with those efforts.

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